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Duxbury Clipper

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A visit with Megan Greenstein

Megan Greenstein juggles businesses with family

By SARAH COUGLIN, CLIPPER CONTRIBUTOR

In addition to owning two distinctive businesses, Megan Greenstein is a busy mother of two. "I have two separate lives," she said, referring to her work life. Born and raised in Duxbury, Greenstein now divides her time among family, friends, her recruiting business (PharmaLogics), and her most recent love, Mad Bay Designs.

THE GREENSTEIN FILE

Family: Husband, Eric, Daughter, Madeline, 6, Son, Bailey, 2.

Favorite Book: Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil

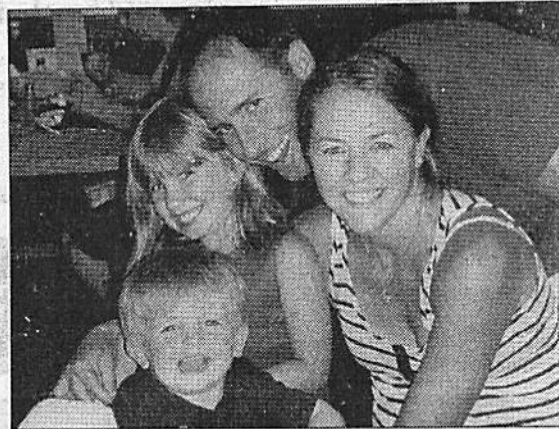
Favorite Movie: Anne of Green Gables & Anne of Avonlea

Hobby: Making bags, learning Photoshop

Pet Peeve: Complacency

When did you launch Mad Bay Designs?

In 2009 the market was terrible; many recruiting companies were going out of business. My company, PharmaLogics, was on that track. We cut down as much as possible to stay afloat. Around that same time, I had this idea about Mad Bay Designs while my husband, Eric, and I were on vacation in Mexico. I was shopping at a hotel gift store and wanted to purchase something authentically Mexican but couldn't find just what I was looking for, something not too tchotchke-ish. I was frustrated yet inspired, and on the flight home imagined creating something both functional and sentimental to remind people of places close to their hearts. I immediately thought of Duxbury, and the bridge, and then I got to thinking about nautical maps and turning them into accessories. My husband thought it was a cool idea and suggested I try and design a line to sell.



Greenstein and her family.

In November 2009, on the way out to a biopharmaceutical conference for my business, I worked on the design for the handbags and on the flight home I created the logo. I worked tirelessly for months researching textiles, fabrics, and charts. The debut of Mad Bay Designs was at the Beauty for Borders Fashion show, a philanthropic event held last March on behalf of Children Without Borders. We started selling immediately after that, and a month later, Mad Bay signed on its flagship store, the Studio.

How did you come up with the name? In honor of my children, Madeline and Bailey...

Your bags are produced in collaboration with the former U.S. Cole Haan manufacturer. How did you come into contact with him? Because of my recruiting background I tend to be a very persistent, diligent person. I made a bunch of phone calls and when I called to talk to the manufacturer [Frank], I knew he was the

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right person. I went to his facility in Fall River where he showed me his designs, all Cole Haan originals. He said he could work with my fabric and we went from there. Now I have a distributor in the same building in Fall River. The handbags are made there and a talented seamstress, Hillary Gately of H2Sew, makes the pillows here in Duxbury.

What was your first design? Our Bermuda bag. We started off with the nautical maps, which I get from public domain and use high-resolution images to put them on fabric. Now we create different styles of bags and pillows with both nautical and topographical maps. Everything is fully customizable — I can put a specific landmark, a yacht club for example, on the map. It makes it “your” place, special to you.

Have you seen any imitation bags or pillows? There were actually people that were doing this before me, of which I was unaware. I created this in my own mind. My application, however, is different; I really customize the maps more so than others.

In how many states are Mad Bay Designs available? Around 15 now.

Did the ocean play a large part in your childhood? Yes, and it was also the driving factor behind Mad Bay. I have the best childhood memories of growing up in Duxbury — going to the beach and playing all day, coming home to take an outdoor shower, eating dinner and going to bed — every day.

Where's your favorite place in Duxbury? Saquish, although I don't get there as often as I would like ...

How do you juggle it all? Well, while all this was happening with Mad Bay, PharmaLogics took off. We doubled in size and moved into a new space in Braintree. When I am there I have to completely switch gears. I do Mad Bay at night, for a few hours after the kids go to bed. I can only think in two-hour increments. It is tough to balance everything and everyone — your children, husband, home and your business. It's a common challenge for every woman. You have to live in the moment; otherwise life will pass you by.